



USAID
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New USAID/WARP gateway for trade opens in Dakar, Senegal

On November 8, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Assistant Administrator Lloyd O. Pierson inaugurated a West Africa Trade Hub in Dakar, Senegal. The Dakar Hub designed to promote Africa's trade capacity, boost international exports and help businesses take advantage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) – a law that provides trade preferences to countries making progress in economic, legal and human rights reforms.

This latest opening brings the total of USAID-funded hubs for global competitiveness (Trade Hubs) to four. Three are located in Botswana, Kenya and Ghana. The newest Trade Hub in Dakar, Senegal will join forces with the Trade Hub in Ghana to help West African economies increase their share of trade with the world. The Dakar hub allows the U.S. to expand its activities throughout the region covered by USAID's West Africa Regional Program (WARP).

The Dakar Trade Hub will also identify other sectors within those countries closest to it, including Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Sierra Leone and The Gambia.



Photo: Richard Nyberg, USAID

Lloyd O. Pierson, USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa (second from left), opens the West African Trade Hub/Dakar office on November 8. Also pictured are Mamadou Diop, Senegal's Minister of Commerce (center), Dr. Jatinder Cheema, Director of the USAID West Africa Program (front right) and Olivier Carduner, Director of USAID/Senegal (rear right).

USAID provides \$1.7 million in assistance following locust infestation

USAID/Senegal is funding a \$1.7 million program to help communities in Mauritania and Senegal cope with the destruction of crops and pasture lands by locusts last year. As part of the program, which will run through the end of 2007, USAID's partners are helping 28,000 beneficiaries in the most affected areas gain access to seeds. Catholic Relief Services and Counterpart International are also carrying out a public information and safety campaign on locust control and the safe use of pesticides. The USAID assistance will enable training in human and environmental protection for 70 herder groups and 300 farmers associations.

USAID microfinance growth continues

New figures indicate that USAID-backed microfinance activities continued to have a growing impact in 2005 since the program ended in November 2004. USAID helped increase client confidence by providing efficient, computerized accounting, greater security, and staff training. This encouraged savings, resulting in more loans. The four largest microfinance institutions, which provide 80% of loans in Senegal, continued to grow. From January to October 2005, the number of clients grew by 31% from 486,770 to 639,830, the amount of savings deposits grew by 39%, from \$90 million to \$125 million, and the value of loans increased by 44%, from \$98.6 million to \$142.4 million.



Photo: Richard Nyberg, USAID

Children in Dakar's Guédiawaye suburb learn more about abstinence, being faithful to one's sexual partner, being tested for HIV and other key HIV/AIDS prevention messages as part of a national information campaign financed by USAID.

USAID documents contributions of natural products to economic growth

Senegal's market for laalo mbep gum, a food additive exported to Europe and valued for a variety of pharmaceutical and cosmetic uses, could expand greatly if producers tap this natural resource in a sustainable way, according to a new study financed by USAID's FRAME program. Gum revenues in 2005 increased to \$154,000 -- \$120,000 more than in 2004.

"Research shows that when rural communities organize themselves to manage their natural resources like laalo mbep gum, they not only work together to fight poverty through increased income but they also protect their environment and their future profits," said Peter Trenchard of USAID/Senegal.



A Senegalese gum harvester

Photo: Aaron Brownell, USAID

Laalo mbep gum, extracted from the *Sterculia setigera* tree, now accounts for more than 40% of the revenue from non-timber forest products produced by communities in the Tambacounda region of Senegal. Senegal currently produces some 1,500 tons per year, and 1,000 tons are exported annually. According to the case study findings, there is considerable room to expand production, processing and marketing of laalo. Some 164 gum producers in Tambacounda have increased their revenue over the past year from 5.6 to 17 million FCFA – the result of assistance from USAID/Senegal's Wula Nafaa project and in collaboration with Setexpharm and other private sector stakeholders.

Netting results, fighting malaria

Results from USAID interventions to combat malaria indicate that the percentage of households owning an insecticide treated net increased from 34% in 2000 to 56% in 2004, with little difference



Photo: Richard Nyberg, USAID

between urban and rural areas. Among households, the percentage of children under five sleeping under a net the night before doubled to 35% in 2004; 42% of women slept under a net. Sales of nets reached 397,917 through October, compared with 125,914 in total sales in 2004.



Photo: Richard Nyberg, USAID

Lloyd O. Pierson, USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa, (left) and Regional FFP Team Leader Carolyn Hughes present Dramane Mariko with a Special Act Award for his program to track lost commodities.

FFP analyst receives award

Commodity losses in Food for Peace programs have been a major problem hampering the implementation of USAID's food aid programs around the world. Losses due to theft and other reasons often occur at the port and between the port and distribution locations. It has been extremely difficult for USAID to account for every sack of food. Until now.

Dramane Mariko, a USAID Food for Peace Senior Food Security Analyst based in Dakar, received a Special Act Award on November 8 for his initiative to conceive and develop a computer-based commodity loss tracking system, called WACOM, that follows Title II commodities from the United States to West Africa. It obliges implementing partners to regularly account for losses due to transport and other reasons. If losses are above \$500 without reasonable justification, organizations are called on to reimburse these costs. His system works.

As a result of his new database system, the U.S. Government prevented the loss of millions of dollars in food aid in West Africa due to pressure for more careful handling, better storage and increased security at ports and on the road. Since the introduction of his computer commodity loss tracking system in 2000, approximately \$500,000 has been paid back to the U.S. Government's Food for Peace account. "His system is so useful it has been adopted by other USAID food aid programs around the world, having a truly global impact," said USAID/Senegal Director, Olivier Carduner.

Read more about USAID/Senegal online
<http://www.usaid-sn.org/index.html>